In Honor of Peer Reviewers

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Journal of eScience Librarianship
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Editorial

In Honor of Peer Reviewers

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Focus

There is ongoing debate in the scholarly community on the challenges and changes to peer review in an open access environment. The Journal of eScience Librarianship is monitoring these discussions, as well as being proactive in recognizing peer reviewers for their service to data science librarianship.

I'm in awe of peer reviewers – there, I've said it! Reviewers may have their 'moments' of being taciturn, perhaps even curmudgeonly, but don't we all? Think about it – we're asking our colleagues, who are experts in services related to data-driven research, to make the time to give expert, professional feedback and advice on how a submitted article can be improved for acceptance into the *Journal of eScience Librarianship (JeSLIB)*. As librarians this is what we do – we make the time to help our colleagues in documenting their research and work, and in doing so developing new professional pathways and services.

If you follow the literature on peer review, the past few years have shown that there is concern on how to conduct this academic review process in the age of open access. Accepted and established peer review methodologies are being brought into question. Does the publishing

process need blind peer review? Should peer review be an open process – one of dialogue and discussion between colleagues before final publication? Is post-publication peer review as effective as the traditional process? In addition to the library and academic literature, a good resource for debate and discussion on this topic is The Scholarly Kitchen. This blog, established by the Society of Scholarly Publishing, has for three years presented "Peer Review Week", publishing blog posts with commentaries and links to related activities on current topics surrounding the concept and process of peer review. One particular post caught my attention: "Is More Recognition the Key to Peer Review Success?". In January 2016, the editors of *JeSLIB* conducted a survey of our peer reviewers and the results were interesting and not far off from the Scholarly Kitchen's post – public acknowledgement and feedback were important to reviewers.

Starting with this issue, *JeSLIB* will annually post a list of our reviewers in recognition of their scholarly effort, time, and assistance in publishing top articles in the field of data librarianship. In addition to this public recognition, we will also provide letters of recognition on request to support reviewers seeking documentation of professional activity or service to the profession for tenure, promotion, or career advancement.

As *JeSLIB* evolves as a leader in data librarianship scholarly communication, we will continue to explore new ways of communicating the changing peer review process. Recently, we have been interested in Amherst College's Lever Press' approach to *visually communicating* peer review in open access scholarship. Mark Edington, Director, Amherst College Press, has been working to develop a "Creative Commons-like" visualization that will communicate the type of peer review process experienced by an open academic resource. It's exciting and we will be paying close attention.

Volume 6, Issue 2 presents research and innovative projects; one article discusses using the process of outside peer review to vet the resources used in scientific research data management and sharing, and another describes the development of a capability maturity model (CMM) to assess and improve research data management practices. All of *JeSLIB*'s peer reviewers have worked diligently to help our authors shape and publish quality scholarship.

Thank you!

Regina Fisher Raboin
Editor-in-chief
Journal of eScience Librarianship (JeSLIB)

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